Rs. 100 crores to the Government of Maharashtra for helping the State in solving the acute problems of housing and slums in Bombay city, the Government of Maharashtra have recently forwarded a broad outline of schemes proposed to be taken up by them to utilise the grant. A Central team will visit Bombay shortly to finalise the relevant details of the schemes. Funds for the release of the Central grant towards the schemes will be provided in the budget of the Ministry of Urban Development during the current financial year and the remaining year of the 7th Five Year Plan. For the current year, a provision of Rs. 2 crores has been proposed out of which Rs. 2 crores will be released as a 'Ways and Means' advance immediately after the Supplementary Demands are voted. The remaining among will be released in a phased manner having regard to the progress of implementation of the schemes.

Prices of steel

*265. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the cost of production and the selling prices of carbon steel in India, U. K., Japan, West Germany and USA respectively;

(b) whether it is a fact that the cost of production of steel in India is the lowest while the selling price of the Indian steel are far in excess of international prices;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to bridge this gap and to increase the capacity utilisation and productivity of the steel plants in India?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) to (c) No authentic information on the cost of production of carbon steel in other countries is available. It is therefore, not possible to compare the cost of production in these countries with India.

On the basis of the prices published in the "World Steel Dynamics—The Steel Strategist, June, 1986" the price of steel in India and abroad as prevailing in 1985 is indicated in the table below:

Country	Domestic List Price	
	Home Currency	Rs./ Tonne
U.K.	£340	5472
U.S.A.	$640	7936
JAPAN	Y 108093	5661
WEST GERMANY	DM 1147	4868
SAIL (Gross Sales-Realization)	Rs. 8116	8116

NOTE : Based on average foreign exchange conversion rates on 1985.

International prices of seeel are lower than the prices of steel manufactured in India. However, the domestic selling price includes various components of levies and taxes such as excise duty, contribution to SDF, Freight Equalisation, EGEAF and JPC Cess whereas the international prices do not appear to reflect economic costs of production.

(d) To raise capacity utilisation and increase productivity the steel producers are taking measures to ensure availability of quality inputs, optimisation of captive power generation, adherence to technological norms, improved maintenance and modernisation of equipment and technological upgradation.

Discussion by the Asian and Pacific countries for preservation of foodgrains

*269. SHRI HARVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Asian and Pacific countries have discussed recently in Delhi, the measures to preserve foodgrains stock;

(b) if so, the outcome of the discussions held and the names of the countries which had participated; and

(c) what new strategy is going to be adopted to preserve foodgrains for a maximum time without any loss?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) to (c) A regional workshop on warehouse management for bag storage of grains and a meeting of National Coordinators of regional network for grain post-harvest technology were held at New Delhi in collaboration with FAO/UNDP during September; 1986.

Apart from India, the other participating countries were Burma, China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

In the discussions, particular stress was laid on scientific storage of foodgrains, training in warehouse management and development of information system. The strategy that emerged from the discussions seeks to strengthen the regional network for better inter-country cooperation in the post-harvest field.

Losses to Modern Food Industries

*270. SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the majority of the Modern Food Industries units at different lacesare incurring losses;

(b) if so, what are the financial performance of each of its units for the years 1983-84 and 1985-86; and

(c) what are the reasons for the losses and the remedial measures being taken to make them viable?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI H. K. L. BHAGAT): (a) Out of 18 units of Modern Food Industries Limited 10 incurred losses during 1985-86.

(b) A statement showing unitwise profit/loss during 1983-84 and 1985-86 is enclosed. (*See* below).

(c) The main reasons for losses are slow turn-over and increase in costs.

The main remedial measures initiated by the company are streamlining and expansion of distribution network, adoption of sales promotion measures and redeployment of manpower.